



August 3, 2006

Ms. Judith F. Judson, Chairwoman
Board of Commissioners
Dept. of Telecommunications and Energy
One South Station
Boston, MA 02110

Re: Verizon Application

Dear Sir/Madame:

I am writing today because I am concerned that your agency may approve Verizon's applications for a statewide franchise, a decision that could prove disastrous for the cities and towns in Massachusetts.

As I am sure you know, every community in this state, including my own, depends on the ability to enter into local franchise agreements with cable providers. If you approve Verizon's application, you will essentially be endorsing another case of big corporate America trying to take advantage of the "little" people.

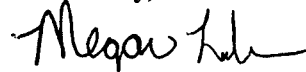
I know for a fact that without the local franchising process my community would not have additional funds available for our schools, libraries, public parks and not to mention our local cable access programming which is an important part of any community. If Verizon does not have to go through the local franchising process, then what incentive do they have to offer the same things that my current provider, Comcast, or other local cable providers offer?

Sure, they will probably come in to the community at first with extremely low rates and tout this as competition, as something good for the consumer. But what happens when the rates are so low that everyone changes to Verizon and the other companies go out of business or lose their market in a given community because of Verizon's unfair advantage over the other companies? Let's not pretend that Verizon is going to keep the rates low. No, just as any other smart business would do, Verizon will increase the rates. After all, they now dominate the local market and have wiped out any and all competition so they can do what they want.

I understand the need for competition, but competition should be on a level playing field. If you approve Verizon's application, they will dominate over the whole cable industry. They should be subject to the same restrictions and rules as every other cable provider in the state. In addition, the local control and oversight over the cable industry should not be eliminated, especially where it is such an important part of a city or towns ability to leverage additional funds. This is a practice that has worked and been accepted for many years and now, during bleak economic times, is not the time to change it.

Please vote against Verizon's application for a statewide franchise.

Sincerely,


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